

Cholmondeley Show 2019

Every year, I attend Hammie's annual ride out to Cholmondeley Castle Classic Car Show. This year I had a new wingman Dave, riding with me on his resplendent 'A'. The ride to our destination however, was to be full of 2-stroke tales, two of which I'd like to share with you.

We were in formation cruising at 70mph; I was leading when a pigeon came into view, flying straight towards me. I closed my eyes waiting for the impending impact but felt nothing (?) I opened my eyes and saw Dave in my mirrors, still tight behind me. I wondered where the pigeon had gone, but carried on with completing the mission.

A few miles passed and we then rode directly into a fierce rain squall. Without stopping to don our waterproof apparel, we both endured the soaking; down on our tanks, tucking every exposed limb into the structure of the machine, water pooling and running off the clocks. Once the maelstrom had passed, we thankfully allowed our bodies to dry in the warm summer air. Fully dried when we reached our destination; we found Hammie's set up and doffed our brain buckets. We laughed as we discussed the ride and I asked Dave about the pigeon. He told me that it had flown right between my front and rear wheel and he thought that anyone else would have fallen off and couldn't believe I'd kept my bike straight, though he wasn't too pleased with my decision to plough on through the rain, without taking the opportunity to put on the oil skins!

Hammy made us fresh coffee and we watched various classic bikes arrive. A T500 pulled up and it was Roy Benson. I know this now because he came over to see our bikes and promptly asked me if my bike used to belong to Jimmy Denton? "How the hell did he know that?" I thought. Turns out, he was Jimmy's best mate and helped him carry the bike up Jimmy's stairs in 1980(see photo). A bigger surprise awaited me however.

When the show ended, we bid farewell and whilst riding home we again encountered a tempest and, once again, underwent a thorough soaking. We were almost home before we had dried and I gave the thumbs up to Dave as he peeled off to head for his gaff. Pulling up onto my drive, a smouldering old car pulls up behind me and a lady gets out. It's Geraldine, the lady that I had bought my J from as a basket case. It's the first time she's seen her late husband's bike since I'd put it back together. She was overwhelmed and gave me a hug. Patting the bike's seat, she exclaimed that Jimmy would have been pleased that his old bike was back being used as it should. She couldn't believe the transformation and I told her how the old iron has been ridden to Holland twice and to various shows and AGMs. A week later I rode him to Oulton Park and watched BSB, camping over with Dave. We enjoyed a Barbie, had a few beers. The racing was great and everyone loved looking at my J.I can't wait for next year.

Stupot

